

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-14 ISO-00 HA-05 ACDA-12 CIAE-00

DODE-00 PM-05 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05

PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-15 /111 W

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FM AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 0106

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY GABORONE

AMEMBASSY LAGOS

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

AMEMBASSY MAPUTO

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMEMBASSY PARIS

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY

UNCLAS PRETORIA 0080

E.O.11652: N/A

TAGS: PDEV, WA, SF, RH

SUBJECT: PIK BOTHA COMMENTS ON NAMIBIA AND RHODESIA

1. SUMMARY: DURING A RADIO INTERVIEW WITH SABC ON DEC 4, SOUTH AFRICAN MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, PIK BOTHA, COMMENTED ON THE UPCOMING ROUND OF NAMIBIA TALKS, SAYING THAT THE NEGOTIATIONS WERE NEARING THE END OF THE ROAD AND THAT NOTHING FURTHER COULD BE REQUIRED OF SOUTH AFRICA. HE SPECULATED THAT THE PRESENCE OF SOUTH AFRICAN TROOPS WOULD BE THE MAIN ISSUE OF THE TALKS, AND NOTED THAT THEIR NUMBER COULD BE REDUCED IF THE THREAT TO THE TERRITORY WERE REDUCED. ON RHODESIA, BOTHA SAID THAT PRESENT INDICATIONS ARE FAVORABLE. THE TEXT OF RELEVANT PORTIONS OF THE INTERVIEW FOLLOWS:

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BEGIN QUOTE:

Q: HOW DO YOU REGARD FURTHER DISCUSSIONS ON SWA IN AMERICA?

A: IN THE FIRST PLACE, IT IS A CONTINUATION OF OUR PREVIOUS DISCUSSIONS HELD IN CAPE TOWN AND PRETORIA. WE ARE NEARING THE END OF THE ROAD IN THIS PROCESS OF DISCUSSIONS. ON THE CONSTITUTIONAL

POLITICAL LEVEL, NOTHING FURTHER CAN BE REQUIRED OF THE RSA OR THE LEADERS OF SWA. I BELIEVE THE TALKS WILL FOCUS LARGELY ON THE PRESENCE OF OUR TROOPS IN SWA. I DO NOT WANT TO GO INTO DETAILS WITH YOU NOW, BUT WE HAVE ALREADY PUT CERTAIN PROPOSALS TO THE

FIVE WESTERN POWERS. THE PROPOSALS ENVISAGE THAT THERE CAN BE A REDUCTION OF TROOPS CONDITIONAL UPON A REDUCTION OF THE THREAT. THUS WE CAN SAY WITH A CLEAR CONSCIENCE THAT WE HAVE AGREED TO NOTHING AND PROPOSED NOTHING WHICH COULD ENDANGER THE TERRITORY OR THE SECURITY OF ITS PEOPLES. FRANKLY, THERE IS NOT MUCH MORE ABOUT WHICH WE CAN TALK.

Q: THE DRAMATIC QUESTION NATURALLY IS WHETHER THE UNITED NATIONS WILL BE SATISFIED. IN LIGHT OF THE LONG DISCUSSIONS, ARE THERE ANY SIGNS OF OPTIMISM IN THIS REGARD?

A: I WAS NEVER OPTIMISTIC THAT THE RADICAL ELEMENTS IN THE UNITED NATIONS WOULD ACCEPT ANYTHING WE SUGGESTED. ON THE OTHER HAND, BECAUSE SO MUCH IS AT STAKE IN SWA AND FOR ITS PEOPLE, ONE CANNOT BE TOO HARD-NOSED.

Q: DO YOU ANTICIPATE A COOLING OFF ON RHODESIA?

A: THIS WILL DEPEND ON THE DEGREE OF ACCOMMODATION MR SMITH CAN REACH WITH THE BLACK LEADERS AND FACTIONS OF THE COUNTRY. PRESENT INDICATIONS ARE FAVORABLE BUT I CANNOT SAY HOW
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SUCCESSFUL THEY WILL ULTIMATELY BE.

Q: DO YOU FORESEE THE POSSIBILITY THAT DEVELOPMENTS IN SWA AND RHODESIA WOULD INVOLVE US IN A PHYSICAL COLLISION IN SOUTHERN AFRICA?

A: I FORESEE THAT POSSIBILITY. I FORESEE THE POSSIBILITY THAT OTHER EVENTS ALSO IN THE COURSE OF TIME COULD INVOLVE US IN SUCH A PHYSICAL COLLISION. IT WOULD BE A COLLISION BETWEEN THOSE WHO WIN THE ELECTION IN SWA AND THE FORCES WHO ARE DISSATISFIED WITH THE ELECTION RESULT. THAT IS TO SAY, EXTERNAL FORCES, WHO WILL THEN FIGHT AGAINST SWA.
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